



# news@library

SPRING SESSION 1998

## Access to Scholarly Information

The Library's greatest challenge is the provision of sufficient information resources to adequately support the University's teaching and research needs. This has been particularly challenging in 1998 when our purchasing power was severely affected by currency fluctuations.

The management of bookvote funding is a perennial problem for universities and their libraries as publishers' prices invariably outstrip overall inflation rates and the volume of scholarly publication continues to expand exponentially. Since 1986, the unit cost of serials has increased by 147% and monographs by 63%. Annual price increases range from 10-15% per annum, often higher, especially in the sciences and engineering.

In the past, we have managed the problem of increased costs by a combination of strategies including:

- advising faculties to maintain an appropriate percentage of their allocation as a *buffer* against inevitable price increases
- placing subscriptions to new titles only if cancellations of the same value are identified
- prepaying major suppliers at a favourable exchange rate and continually negotiating the best cost/service agreements
- continuing to increment efficiencies in processing costs and staffing levels

Until 1997, these strategies have been abetted by a relatively favourable exchange rate and supplementation of the bookvote from the University's development funds and DEETYA Quality funds. In 1998, the bookvote received no supplementation and, as the majority of publications originate overseas, purchasing power was severely eroded by the devaluation of the Australian dollar.



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With a predicted increase in costs of up to 34%, it has been necessary to cancel 679 titles costing a total of \$377,700. A full list of titles cancelled is available from the Library web page at: [http://www-library.uow.edu.au/About/cancelled\\_serials98.htm](http://www-library.uow.edu.au/About/cancelled_serials98.htm)

Some cancelled titles are available on full-text databases and links to these have been incorporated into the web page. A print list of cancellations is available for consultation from the Information Desk.

Access to the table of contents of most cancelled journals is available free of charge through the electronic Current Contents service available on the web at: <http://melba.unilinc.edu.au/ovidweb-x/>. This service delivers an email alert to the user once you have established your individual profile on the database. A guide to setting up your profile is available from the Library Information Desk.

All members of the campus community share our concern about the impact on teaching and research of cancelling subscriptions. Working with the Library Committee, we have made every effort to obtain additional funding and to maintain access to the most heavily used and high priority titles.

Requests from the Library Committee for a share of research infrastructure funding to support research serials have, so far, been unsuccessful. Similarly, resolutions of the Library Committee seeking additional bookvote funding have been unable to be met. However, the Vice-Chancellor has identified \$500,000 in the 1999 budget to provide a *hedge* against further devaluation. There should be no need for further cancellations next year.

In order to maintain some form of access to needed serial information, while reducing overall costs, the following strategies have been agreed in discussion with the Deans, Senior Executive and the Library Committee. The strategies will be progressively introduced in consultation with faculties:

- subscribe to electronic full-text services where

this offers improved coverage and availability at lower cost

- cancel print versions of titles available on full-text databases as long as quality and coverage are sufficient to meet the needs of clients
- use document delivery to replace some low-use titles
- develop collection profiles with each faculty to more closely align purchases with faculty needs. The serial surveys currently being completed by faculties will provide some of this information.
- continue to pursue cooperative and resource-sharing mechanisms with other libraries

*We recognise the need for increased support and training during the transition from print to electronic and this will be a high priority in 1999.*

The effectiveness of these strategies will be determined, to a large extent, by the support of faculty members. We recognise the need for increased support and training during the transition from print to electronic and this will be a high priority in 1999.

#### **ADVANTAGES OF ELECTRONIC OVER PRINT**

- electronic storage is more cost effective
- electronic access is available around the clock from any location
- electronic resources may be accessed by more than one user at a time
- electronic resources are typically not subject to the dangers of theft, damage and loss which often occurs with printed materials
- electronic publications overcome the inflexibility of print as updating is easier
- consortium-based purchases of full-text databases provide access to an expanded range of titles at less cost than individual print subscriptions to the same range

Problems still to be resolved in the electronic environment, include electronic archiving and copyright. We are working with publishers, suppliers and international associations to try to resolve these and other issues in order to fully realise the potential benefits of the new environment.



## PROBLEMS TO BE RESOLVED

- Pricing of electronic journals is still linked to print version and may be more costly
- Quality of some online versions will need to be monitored
- Licensing and copyright restrictions increase the complexity of managing electronic information
- The cost of maintaining appropriate infrastructure to support electronic access is significant
- Training and updating is an ongoing requirement for library staff, academic staff and students

There are no easy, readily available solutions to the problem of affordable access to scholarly communication. The suggested strategies will not result in overall savings, however, by preferring electronic to print, the foundation will be established for the inevitable migration from print to electronic.

In the longer term, universities may need to consider the possibility of reclaiming the scholarly communication process from the publishers.

## SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION

Scholarly communication is a complex process that requires faculty, in order to be tenured or promoted, to publish. The current publishing environment is a monopoly-like marketplace increasingly dominated by large commercial companies to which faculty sign over their copyrights. These publishers sell this scholarship back to the academic community at steadily increasing prices and, in the electronic environment, with restrictions on use. There is a growing realisation that transforming this process will require a collective effort by the higher education community. The move to increased electronic communication will provide advantages such as the promotion of more collaborative research modes.

Easy and open long-term access to research and scholarship cannot be secured by libraries alone. All members of the educational community - faculty, administrators, librarians and publishers - must be willing to explore new ways of thinking about the creation and dissemination of scholarly communication.

An article on this topic entitled: *Publish or Perish* is available from the Library's web page.

# Serials on the Library Web page

A list of Current Serials Subscriptions is available from

<http://www-library.uow.edu.au/About/SERIALS/Index.htm>

The table is organised by faculty, department and then by title.

A list of Serials Cancellations is available from

[http://www-library.uow.edu.au/About/cancelled\\_serials98.htm](http://www-library.uow.edu.au/About/cancelled_serials98.htm)

Serials are listed alphabetically with an asterisk next to those titles available electronically via ABI/INFORM or Expanded Academic Index. Links are available to search both these databases.

## SEARCHING BY JOURNAL NAME IN EXPANDED ACADEMIC INDEX

At the main search interface, choose Powertrac (advanced searching). Click on Select Index and choose Journal name (jn). Type in the name of the journal. All the articles from that journal which are included in the database will be retrieved.

## SEARCHING BY JOURNAL NAME IN ABI/INFORM (USING THE OVID INTERFACE)

At the main search interface, click on the Journal icon on the menu bar. Enter the first words of the journal title and click on Perform Search. A list of titles will appear. By clicking in the box next to the journal name, you can select the articles in that journal.

# Electronic Resources from your Desktop: a guide for academic staff

What is an alerting service? How can it help you conduct research?

Do you need an article overnight? What are your document delivery options?

Which library services provide access to electronic full-text journals? How can you get a list of the journals included in such services?

These and other questions are answered in a new guide recently sent out to all academic staff.

*Electronic Resources from your Desktop: a Guide for Academic Staff*, has been sent to all academic staff. Please contact your Faculty Librarian or the Information Desk staff if you need assistance with access to any of the resources listed.

The Guide is designed to assist staff to find their way through the Library's increasing range of electronic resources by providing an overview of the following services:

- Alerting services
- Electronic journals
- Document delivery options
- Trial databases

An alerting service, for example, aids the researcher by providing information about newly published journal articles. Normally the researcher sets up a profile of their research interest and results are e-mailed as database updates are run against the profile. The guide provides instructions for setting up an Alert on Current Contents, a multidisciplinary database available from the Library's web page.

The guide also advises of links to the electronic journals for which the Library holds subscriptions.

Check out the Guide and try out the wide range of resources available.

## Focus on Academics... desktop access to information

Would you like the opportunity to talk to Library staff about improving your access to electronic information? Do you want to have input to future training programs for academics in using the newest electronic resources? Or just to tell us about problems you may be experiencing in getting onto the resources that interest you? We'd certainly like to hear from you!

If you attend one of our focus groups early next year, you can do all of this!

By coming along, you will assist us by letting us know:

- whether you use electronic resources and why
- how we can improve the Library's web pages for easier access to electronic information
- the kind of difficulties you may be experiencing in accessing electronic information
- what training needs you have
- the best options for informing you about new databases or database trials

We intend to conduct focus groups during 25 January to 12 February 1999. These should last approximately one hour. If you are going to be on campus then, we'd like to hear from you. We want to speak to academics with all levels of experience in using electronic information, from the fearful novice to the intrepid navigator!

If you can attend, please contact : Catriona McGurk on x3332 or e-mail [catriona\\_mcgurk@uow.edu.au](mailto:catriona_mcgurk@uow.edu.au) or Helen Mandl on x4176 or e-mail [helen\\_mandl@uow.edu.au](mailto:helen_mandl@uow.edu.au)



# Library "Market Day" Database Trials

Over the summer, the Library is offering an exhilarating range of databases and full text journals through the "Market Day" Databases Trials. The market day theme allows members of the Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL) and selected vendors the opportunity to communicate with each other about existing electronic products and product developments on an annual basis. The emphasis is on providing full text to users and several of the principal vendors have provided access to their most significant resources.

Link to current trials via the Market Day Database Trials page at

<http://www-library.uow.edu.au/Database/market.htm>

Passwords are required for some databases. A list can be obtained from the Information Desk or by phone, quoting name and ID number.

These trials are conducted on a national level and generally lead to university libraries being able to purchase databases at cheaper rates on a consortium basis. The trials give both the Library and end users the opportunity to evaluate the resources in terms of content and access. Feedback from academics and students is an essential component of these trials so that library staff can take decisions about purchasing databases which meet the needs of our users.

Vendors and products include:

*Cambridge Scientific Abstracts, available until 1 Feb 1999*

This provides access to databases such as

- Biological Sciences Database (includes MEDLINE and TOXLINE)
- Computer Sciences Collection
- Environmental Sciences & Pollution Management Database

*UMI ProQuest Direct, available until 31 Dec 1998*

Access is available to several ProQuest Direct databases, including ABI/Inform Global. UMI ProQuest Direct will be the new vendor for ABI from 1999. Visit the trial pages and check out the extra years of coverage from 1970 and those articles which now include graphics and tables.

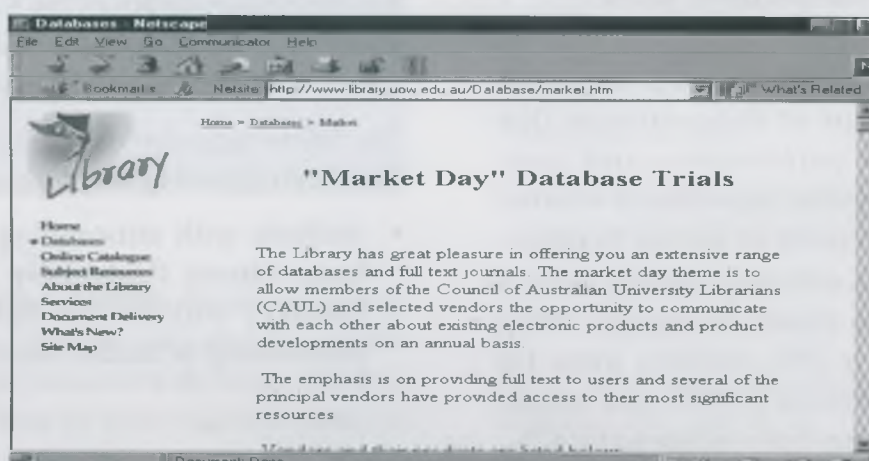
Other ProQuest trial databases with a high percentage of full text articles include:

- Proquest Applied Science and Technology Plus
- Proquest Computing
- Proquest Health
- Proquest Education Plus Text
- Proquest Medical Library
- Proquest Social Sciences Plus Text

Link to the full range of trials via:

<http://www-library.uow.edu.au/Database/market.htm>

For more information, contact librarians listed for each vendor on the trials web page or Neil Grant on x3547 or via email: [neil\\_grant@uow.edu.au](mailto:neil_grant@uow.edu.au)



## Library - finalist in Quality Award

The Library is proud to have been recognised as one of six finalists for an Australian Quality Award for Business Excellence. It is the first time a library has ever been shortlisted alongside major business corporations at award level. The awards are administered through the Australian Quality Council, which is a non-profit organisation whose role is to encourage and assist Australian enterprises of all kinds to achieve international competitiveness and best practice through the application of quality principles and practices. Evaluation is conducted by a five member team and includes a site visit. Feedback from the evaluation team recognized the effectiveness of the Library's team-based structures and the commitment of the Library staff to delivering excellent service.



*Finalist - 1998 Australian Quality Awards  
for Business Excellence*

Seeking external evaluation through the award process was a means of demonstrating that improvements in performance and cost-effectiveness are possible, regardless of whether your bottom line is profit or service to others. Some of the results achieved include: service satisfaction surveys attract an average rating from clients of 85 to 89%, delivery times for resources have improved by 63% and remote access to databases has been enhanced by 47%.

## Reciprocal borrowing: new conditions for 1999

### UNISON BORROWING AGREEMENT

An agreement has been established between the universities covered by the NSW Vice Chancellors' Committee, (see list on next page), for a borrowing scheme which will enable all staff and students, irrespective of category of enrolment, to borrow in person from other libraries in the NSWVCC group.

Note: This is a change from previous years, where only postgraduate research students and academic staff were able to borrow under the UNISON agreement.

### FEES

An annual fee of \$40 per person (academics exempt), per institution, has been set, based on average usage by guest borrowers.

Note:

- a) This fee is set for 12 months under the agreement and is subject to annual review.
- b) Postgraduate research students will be able to apply for a \$40 reimbursement for the cost of membership at one institution. Students in this category should enquire at the office of the department or school in which they are enrolled.

### BORROWING CONDITIONS

Loan conditions will be set by each lending institution and therefore may vary considerably. It is the responsibility of the guest borrower to understand the loan conditions. Web pages are a good starting point to check conditions.

The following common conditions, however, have been agreed by all libraries:

- students with outstanding fines from the home library (University of Wollongong Library) will not be able to establish membership at another institution



- the \$40 fee is paid to the home library (University of Wollongong Library) before authorisation is given to establish borrowing from another library
- an application form is available from the Library web page <http://www-library.uow.edu.au/>
- registration will be for one calendar year (or part thereof) commencing 1 March
- any fines imposed by the other libraries will be met by the guest borrower
- fines not paid to other institutions will lead to a block on borrowing privileges at the home library (University of Wollongong Library)
- a replacement charge of \$100 per print item and \$50 per non-print item will be debited to your University of Wollongong Library record for lost or non-returned items you have borrowed from other libraries

#### **PARTICIPATING UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES - UNISON BORROWING AGREEMENT**

Australian Catholic University

University of Canberra

Charles Sturt University

Macquarie University

University of New England

University of New South Wales

University of Newcastle

Southern Cross University

University of Sydney

University of Technology, Sydney

University of Western Sydney

University of Wollongong

*news@library* is published in both Autumn and Spring Sessions each year. Comments and suggestions on this newsletter should be forwarded to the Editor - Catriona McGurk by telephone on 4221 3332 or by email to [catriona\\_mcgurk@uow.edu.au](mailto:catriona_mcgurk@uow.edu.au).

## **Information Desk Survey**

Earlier this year, a survey was conducted to assess client service satisfaction with information and reference desk points in the Library. 600 surveys were distributed and 60% were returned, with all faculties and client groups represented in returned surveys. Clients were asked to score 21 issues on a scale of one to five on the importance of the issue to them and to provide a score using the same scale on how they perceived the Library was performing on the issue.



### **RESULTS**

Overall, there was evidence of congruence with clients' perceptions of importance and Library performance. Issues with the highest gap scores were identified as opportunities for improvement. Strategies implemented include:

- Altering staff rostering procedures to improve queuing time
- Through training, improving the questioning techniques of all staff rostered at the Information Desk
- Improving signage in the Multimedia Lab

Clients' comments were also taken into consideration when planning improvements. Examples include:

- Changing the format of database workshops to include a greater hands-on component
- Providing an electric stapler in the Photocopy Room (staples courtesy of the SRC)

For a full report and survey analysis, contact Catriona McGurk on 42 213332 or via e-mail: [catriona\\_mcgurk@uow.edu.au](mailto:catriona_mcgurk@uow.edu.au)

## OnLine Australia Day 98

As part of a Federal Government initiative through the National Office for the Information Economy, the Library recently participated in OnLine Australia Day on 27 November.



With one of the national themes being 'Seniors Surf the Net', a group of older persons were introduced to the Internet via presentations from Library staff and Ray Stace from CEDIR. This was followed by a guided 'hands-on' session in the Library's Teaching Lab and in one of the ITS Labs, courtesy of Susan Gardner, ITS. The event was covered by local TV and newspaper media and was received with great enthusiasm by all participants.



*"Seniors Surf the Net"*

## University Archives Acquisition George Petersen Papers

Through the intervention of Assoc. Prof. Ray Markey of the Department of Economics, the University Archives recently acquired a collection of papers from the former Labor Party MHR for Kembla and University Council member, Mr George Petersen. The material in a large part relates to Mr Petersen's work as a local member of the New South Wales parliament between 1968 and 1988. As an active supporter of the Left-wing Socialist faction of the ALP, Mr Petersen faced a somewhat stormy time in parliament during the late 1960s and early 1970s when the Askin Liberal government was in power. Files in the collection relating to issues such as prison reform, homosexuality, the Vietnam War, abortion, Aborigines, and workers compensation law are evidence of his active involvement in social justice issues. A 638 page manuscript autobiography accompanies the collection.



*George Petersen*

The George Petersen Papers form a valuable addition to the University Archives, and interested researchers are invited to make use of this material. For further information on this and other material held by the Archives, along with details on access, check out the University Archives web page at <http://www-library.uow.edu.au/archives/archives.htm>